



USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agriculture Information Network

Template Version 2.09

Voluntary Report - public distribution

Date: 1/30/2004

GAIN Report Number: JA4004

Japan

Solid Wood Products

Japan and Korea Agree to Oppose Wood Product Tariff Elimination

2004

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Report Highlights:

Japanese and Korean Forestry Agency officials launched a bilateral forum on January 9th in which they agreed to cooperate to retain tariffs on forest products in bilateral and multilateral fora to protect domestic industries and preserve natural resources.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1]
[JA]

According to the Japan Forest Product Journal, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries representatives from Japan and South Korea met on January 9, 2004 in Taejon, South Korea, to discuss forestry policy. The meeting launched a regular forum for a dialogue on trade issues. Both countries agreed to oppose tariff elimination because of the resulting cost of maintaining minimum harvest levels for forest management and to protect natural resources.

The next meeting will be in 2005. Japan and Korea promised to use this forum for bilateral cooperation in the Doha WTO negotiations and cooperation in the development of a Free Trade Agreement. While forest product tariff elimination continues to be discussed within the context of WTO trade negotiations, Japan and Korea made the following commitments.

- Japan and Korea will not support New Zealand if they propose the elimination of wood tariffs in WTO multilateral trade talks.
- Forest product tariffs not only protect the domestic industry interest, but also protect the environment and preserve limited natural forest resources.
- Both countries will cooperate closely to oppose tariff elimination in the forest products sector.
- The Forestry Agencies of both governments will continue this bilateral forum to protect common trade interests in the forest products sector.

The article noted that Korea has increased lower quality plywood export to Japan at the same time that Japan has increased higher-quality plywood exports to Korea.